

# Transforming Education in Rhode Island



## The Race to the Top Opportunity

### Race to the Top Implementation Update – June 2, 2011

---

**Year One, Quarter Three: March 1, 2011 – May 31, 2011**

#### Key Accomplishments in Implementing our Plan

##### ☐ Approval of Rhode Island's State and LEA Scopes of Work

- In response to the U.S. Department of Education's (ED) request that Rhode Island add more detail to the Local Education Agency (LEA) budgets that were submitted with our scopes of work, the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) worked with LEAs to develop more detailed budgets throughout the months of February and March. RIDE fiscal and program staff reviewed and approved all LEA budgets and submitted them to ED.
- During the months of February and March, RIDE also submitted to ED three amendments to Rhode Island's original Race to the Top (RTTT) application. These amendments were: 1) A request to adjust some of the project timelines that had been laid out in the original grant application; 2) A request to redirect funding to support our development of state and LEA performance management systems; and 3) A request to redirect funding to support a statewide virtual learning initiative.
- On April 8, 2011, Rhode Island received notice that ED approved our state and LEA scopes of work and budgets, as well as the three amendments we submitted, allowing us to access our full RTTT award. All scopes of work and budget summaries, as well approval letters, were posted to the RTTT section of the RIDE website.

##### ☐ Developing Performance Monitoring Processes

- State Level: RIDE is using a process called EdStat to monitor our progress toward meeting the objectives of our RTTT projects. EdStat is a data-driven accountability process that tracks our success implementing project plans and helps us to problem-solve around challenges that arise during implementation of our RTTT initiatives. Throughout this quarter, RTTT project leads have prepared detailed work plans for RTTT projects, which

include specific tasks and metrics that can be analyzed using the EdStat process. All RIDE staff who are responsible for implementing RTTT projects received orientation and training on the EdStat process, and the first two EdStat sessions were held in May.

In addition, Rhode Island received an on-site program review from our RTTT program officer and other officials from ED on April 29, 2011. The team reviewed our work to date toward building strong, statewide capacity to implement and sustain our plan, with particular focus on our work toward supporting the transition to the Common Core State Standards and new high-quality assessments.

- LEA Level: RIDE submitted to ED the required RTTT Performance Monitoring Plan on April 28, 2011, which describes how the state (grantee) will monitor LEAs' (subgrantees) progress in implementing RTTT, both programmatically and fiscally. The Performance Monitoring Plan was developed throughout the months of February-April with input from the 'LEA Design Team,' which includes representatives of superintendents, school committees, teachers' unions, business managers, technology directors, and principals. A primary feature of this plan is the Collaborative Learning for Outcomes (CLO) process, which is a facilitated process that enables groups of LEAs to manage performance toward results by engaging in data-driven, problem-solving conversations with their peers and with RIDE. We are planning to pilot this process with a group of LEAs this summer and roll it out with all LEAs this fall.

#### ❑ Year One Projects: Educator Evaluation and Study of the Standards

- Educator Evaluation:
  - With feedback from our Technical Advisory Committee, we developed sample Student Learning Objective (SLO) templates and examples for high-quality SLOs. We finalized the components of the "version 1.0" Rhode Island Model Educator Evaluation System, including rubric competencies, language, and scoring; SLO templates, samples, and the scoring rubric; observation templates; guidance and protocols for implementation; and support and development templates.
  - We have completed field testing of the teacher and administrator evaluation models. RIDE has held initial training sessions to prepare LEA leaders for gradual implementation of the model, and we have scheduled comprehensive training sessions on the model for all LEA leaders. Throughout this quarter, RIDE continued to offer small-group sessions for teachers to learn more about the evaluation system. We also conducted two webinars for the general educational community to learn more about the model. Module-One trainings have been postponed as we continue to collaborate with the RIFT innovation Consortium to merge our collective work into one evaluation system.
  - RIDE completed the interview and screening process for the Intermediary Service Providers (ISPs) who will deliver training. Initial training sessions have also been held. ISPs who attended training agreed to do so without payment. We have an extremely dedicated and talented pool of individuals willing to support implementation in our LEAs.

- RIDE continues to collaborate with the Rhode Island Federation of Teachers and Health Professionals Innovation Consortium to merge the two evaluation system models. We anticipate gaining clarity around our direction by the end of this quarter, as we all need to plan for summer training and implementation.
- Study of the Standards:
  - In March, RIDE began to certify ISPs to deliver the Study of the Standards training to educators.
  - In April, we began to train Rhode Island educators on the new Common Core State Standards. To date, we have held 12 sessions of Study of the Standards training: 308 educators have been trained from seven LEAs. Training participants are completing surveys at these sessions to provide feedback on the effectiveness of the Study of the Standards training.

## ☐ Communications

- During this quarter, RIDE developed a RTTT Communications Plan, which will help us to effectively engage stakeholders throughout the four years of RTTT implementation. New communications tools were developed, including an updated one-page overview of Rhode Island's RTTT plan, a one-page analysis of the engagement strategies and adaptive challenges cited in the LEA scopes of work, and talking points. In addition, RIDE developed a central event calendar to help RIDE staff coordinate with one another to schedule meetings with LEAs in more efficient ways and to provide superintendents and other district and school representatives with a single, easily accessible way to learn about meetings related to RTTT and other statewide education work. Finally, our RTTT Steering Committee met on May 16, 2011, to discuss ways that committee members can engage each of their networks in what is happening with RTTT.

## ☐ Recruitment

- At this time, RIDE has filled 11 of the 22 positions supported by RTTT. Two additional positions are expected to be filled in June. We continue to plan for and recruit the other nine positions.

## ☐ Requests for Proposals

- RIDE has developed and disseminated 16 Requests for Proposals (RFPs) to support RTTT implementation. The five major RFPs are to support the Educator Evaluation Data System, the Instructional Management System, Interim Assessment, Formative Assessment Training Modules, and the Academy for Transformative Leadership. Prior to releasing these RFPs, we conducted in-depth market research and brought together LEA stakeholder focus groups to specify critical functions and expectations to be articulated in each proposal. Currently, RIDE is establishing RFP review teams consisting of internal and external experts and reviewing proposals.